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NEWS RELEASE

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EOIR Announces Latest Disciplinary Actions Under Rules of Professional Conduct

Three Attorneys Immediately Suspended; One Receives Final Order; One Is Reinstated

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) has taken disciplinary action against four attorneys after charging them with violations of the Rules of Professional Conduct for immigration practitioners. One attorney was reinstated. The Rules of Professional Conduct appear in Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR Parts 1003 and 1292). In most cases, the disciplinary action is initiated as a result of sanctions imposed by other jurisdictions or a criminal conviction.

Although the disciplinary process may vary according to the specific circumstances of each case, generally it includes the following steps:

Disciplinary proceedings begin with a Notice of Intent to Discipline filed with the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) by the Office of the General Counsel of either EOIR or U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The BIA requires the attorney to respond to the alleged violations. In some cases, a Petition for Immediate Suspension also is filed and the BIA orders the attorney to be suspended immediately from practice before the immigration courts, the BIA, and the DHS. (DHS joins EOIR in taking the disciplinary action.) Disciplined attorneys are directed to notify promptly, in writing, their clients with pending immigration cases that they may no longer represent them before the BIA, the immigration courts, or the DHS. Disciplined attorneys must petition and be reinstated by the BIA before they can resume the practice of law before the BIA, the immigration courts, and the DHS.

Immediate Suspension

The BIA ordered the immediate suspension of the following attorneys:

- **Larry Johnson:** He was disbarred from the practice of law by the Appellate Division, Supreme Court, First Department, State of New York, after he failed to appear or apply in writing for a hearing or reinstatement after being ordered suspended. He was immediately suspended by the BIA on May 19, 2006, based on his disbarment in New York, pending final disposition of his case.

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- **Kishan Khanna:** He was suspended from the practice of law for 9 months by the Supreme Court of Colorado for engaging in the unauthorized practice of law. He was immediately suspended by the BIA on May 19, 2006, based on his suspension in Colorado, pending final disposition of his case.
- **Carlos E. Morales:** He was suspended indefinitely from the practice of law by the Supreme Court of Florida. He was immediately suspended by the BIA on May 19, 2006, based on his suspension in Florida, pending final disposition of his case.

Final Orders of Discipline

The BIA issued a Final Order of Discipline against the following attorney:

- **Michael Imevbore Ojo:** A final order of May 5, 2006, suspends him from practice before immigration tribunals for 12 months, effective Dec. 2, 2005, based on his suspension in Texas for numerous violations of the state's rules of professional conduct, including neglect, failure to communicate, and failure to cooperate with the state bar investigation.

Reinstatement

The BIA reinstated the following attorney to practice before the immigration tribunals:

- **Todd Norman Ostergard:** He was reinstated on May 19, 2006, following a 90-day suspension, effective March 19, 2004, and after being reinstated to the practice of law in Florida.

Background

The Rules of Professional Conduct include provisions specifying grounds for disciplinary action, requirements for receiving and investigating complaints, and procedures for conducting hearings. The rules also authorize the BIA to suspend immediately a practitioner who has been subject to disbarment, suspension, or resignation with an admission of misconduct as imposed by a federal or state court, or who has been convicted of a serious crime, pending a summary proceeding and final sanction. They are available on the EOIR website at http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/vll/fedreg/2000_2001/fr27jn00R.pdf.

EOIR announces these disciplinary actions to inform the public about practitioners who are not authorized to represent clients in any matter before an immigration tribunal. EOIR also posts a "List of Disciplined Practitioners" on its website at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/profcond/chart.htm>. In an effort to provide more detailed information about individual attorney discipline cases, every new immediate suspension or final order issued beginning June 27, 2005, can be accessed through this list by clicking on the highlighted "date" link. Links to older orders, issued since July 2000, will be included gradually.

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Additional information about the Attorney Discipline Program can be found at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcond.htm> and <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcondfaks.htm> on the EOIR website.

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EOIR is responsible for adjudicating immigration cases. Specifically, under delegated authority from the Attorney General, EOIR interprets and administers federal immigration laws by conducting immigration court proceedings, appellate reviews, and administrative hearings. EOIR consists of three components: the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge, which is responsible for managing the numerous immigration courts located throughout the United States where immigration judges adjudicate individual cases; the Board of Immigration Appeals, which primarily conducts appellate reviews of immigration judge decisions; and the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer, which adjudicates immigration-related employment cases. EOIR is committed to providing fair, expeditious, and uniform application of the nation's immigration laws in all cases.

Information about EOIR immigration proceedings is available on EOIR's website <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/subject.htm>.